Saṅskṛt Pronunciation Guide

This system of transliteration (Romanized Saṅskṛt) has been almost universally accepted by Saṅskṛt scholars all over the world in the last seventy years. Each and every syllable is accurately reproduced from the original with no loss of information nor any ambiguity.

Numerals: 1-१, 2-२, 3-३, 4-४, 5-५, 6-६, 7-७, 8-८, 9-९, 0-०

13 Vowels: *N.B.* ***Long*** *vowels are* ***twice*** *as long as* ***short*** *ones*

a अ ā आ i इ ī ई u उ ū ऊ e ए ai ऐ o ओ au औ ṛ ऋ ṝ ॠ ḷ ऌ

Short Vowels (*V*)		**Long** Vowels (*W*)		**Long** Vowels (*W*)	
a V1	अ As in b**u**t	ā W1	आ As in f**a**r	e W4	ए As in th**e**y
i V2	इ As in p**i**n	ī W2	ई As in p**e**ace	ai W5	ऐ As in **ai**sle
u V3	उ As in p**u**sh	ū W3	ऊ As in r**u**le	o W6	ओ As in f**o**am
-	-	-	-	au W7	औ As in h**ow**
ṛ V8	ऋ As in **r**im but without the ‘i’ [2]	ṝ W8	ॠ As in **r**im, but longer	-	-
ḷ V9	ऌ As in **lr**ee	[2] ṛ is a short rolling of the tongue, ***not*** ‘ree’ nor ‘ru’ as it is in Hindi / Bengali / Oriya etc			

Symbols for vowels:

a-(nil)	ā–ा	i–ि	ī–ी	u–ु	ū–ू	e–े	ai–ै	o–ो	au–ौ	ṛ–ृ	ṝ–ॄ	ḷ-ॢ	ं	ः	्
क ka (V1)	का kā (W1)	कि ki (V2)	की kī (W2)	कु ku (V3)	कू kū (W3)	के ke (W4)	कै kai (W5)	को ko (W6)	कौ kau (W7)	कृ kṛ (V8)	कॄ kṝ (W8)	कॢ kḷ (V9)	कं kaṁ	कः kaḥ(a)	क् k

	Saṅskṛt	Romanized Saṅskṛt	Saṅskṛt	Romanized Saṅskṛt
Symbols	ऽ	’	्	(nil)
	Avagraha (pronounced as a very short ‘a’)		**Virāma** (drop the final ‘a’)	
How to decipher the script	मेऽच्युत = me’cyuta = me + acyuta = ma + e + ’ + ½ca + ½ya + u + ta = म + े + ऽ + ½च + ½य + ु + त = म + े + ऽ + च + य + ु + त		राम् =rām =ra + ā + ma – a वाक् = vāk = va + ā + ka – a = व + ा + क + ्	

35 Consonants:

		Sanskṛt	Romanized Sanskṛt	Sanskṛt	Romanized Sanskṛt	Sanskṛt	Romanized Sanskṛt	Sanskṛt	Romanized Sanskṛt	Sanskṛt	Romanized Sanskṛt
25 SPARŚAS	*Guttural (G)* (Throat)	क	ka G1	ख	kha G2	ग	ga G3	घ	gha G4	ङ	ṅa G5
		As in ‘**cu**t'		Wal**k hu**t		**Gu**llible		Di**g h**ard		Si**nge**r	
	Palatal (P) (Middle of Tongue)	च	ca P1	छ	cha P2	ज	ja P3	झ	jha P4	ञ	ña P5
		Chuckle		Stit**ch-hu**t		**Ju**ngle		He**dge-ha**rd		Ca**ny**on jña=ज्ञ (not ‘gya’) [1] Si**ng y**ellow	
	Cerebral (C) (Ridge)	ट	ṭa C1	ठ	ṭha C2	ड	ḍa C3	ढ	ḍha C4	ण	ṇa C5
		Tub		Ligh**t-hu**t		**Do**ve		Re**d-h**ot		**Nu**t	
		(NB: Dots below all) Tongue curled up, tip touching hard part of palate									
	Dental (D) (Teeth)**	त	ta D1	थ	tha D2	द	da D3	ध	dha D4	न	na D5
		Thorough		Men**t(th)h**ol**		**Tho**u		Rhy**th(ha)**m		I**n** the end	
		**But tongue must press against all upper teeth for all 5 sounds									
	Labial (L) (Lips)	प	pa L1	फ	pha L2	ब	ba L3	भ	bha L4	म	ma L5
		Puddle		To**p-hu**t (Not ‘f’ sound) [1]		**Bu**ndle		Ro**b-hu**t		**Mo**ther	
4 SEMI-VOWELS (*antaḥ-sthaḥ*) (*SV*)		य	ya SV1	र	r SV2	ल	la SV3	व	va SV4		
		Yard		**Ru**n		**La**rd		**Va**rnish (But as ‘**wa**’ if joined with a consonant in the same syllable eg. ‘s**vā**mī’)			
3 SIBIL-ANTS (*ūṣmas*) (SS)		श	śa SS1	ष	ṣa SS2	स	sa SS3				
		(*tālavya*) As in ‘a**s sha**rp’, tongue in front (light sound)		(*mūrdhanya*) As in ‘pu**sh**’ but with tongue pulled back (heavy sound)		(*dantya*) As in ‘**su**n’ (pure ‘ss’)					
3 MORE CONSO-NANTS		ं	ṁ (*anusvāra*)	ः	ḥ (*visarga**)	ह	ha				
		कं = kaṁ		कः = kaḥ(a)		(*aspirate*)					
		Nasal sound as in ‘o**ṁ**’		* (see explanation below)		As in **hu**t					

*If the ḥ is at the end of a line, repeat the previous vowel lightly: eg aḥ=aḥa, iḥ= iḥi

[1] Sounds like ‘gya’ & ‘fa’ exist in Hindi, Bengali etc but are never heard in Sanskṛt

Created by Dīna-Anukampana Dāsa 14th January 2003, Malaysia

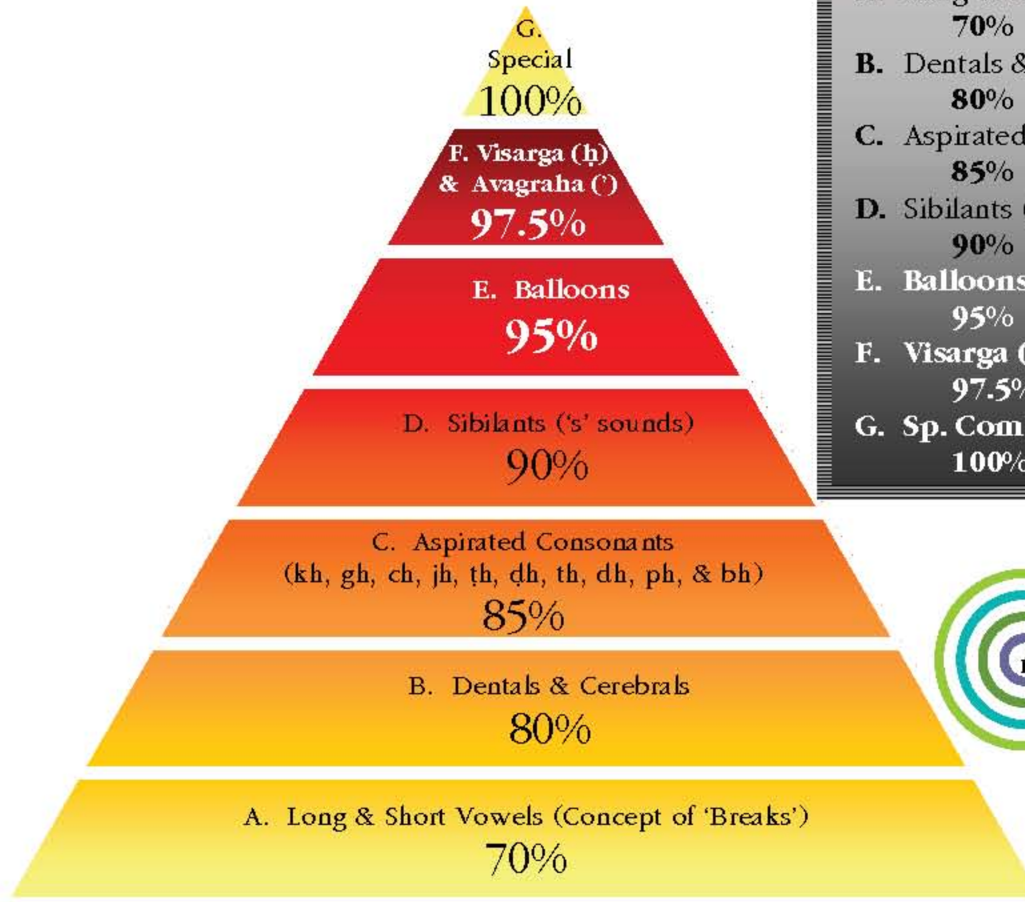
List of Roman Alphabets used (with combinations & permutations) to represent the full spectrum of Saṅskṛt alphabets:

1. A अ
2. Ā आ
3. B ब्
4. C च्
5. D द्
6. Ḍ ड्
7. E ए
8. G ग्
9. H ह्
10.Ḥ ः
11.I इ
12.Ī ई
13.J ज्
14.K क्
15.L ल्
16.L-. ऌ
17.L-._ ॡ
18.M म्
19.Ṁ ं
20.N न्
21.Ṅ ङ्
22.Ṇ ण्
23.O ओ
24.P प्
25.R र्
26.Ṛ ऋ
27.Ṝ ॠ
28.S स्
29.Ś श्
30.Ṣ ष्
31.T त्
32.Ṭ ट्
33.U उ
34.Ū ऊ
35.V व्
36.Y य्



PERFECTION IN SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION





A. Long & Short Vowels ('Breaks')
70%

B. Dentals & Cerebrals
80%

C. Aspirated Consonants (kh, gh, etc.)
85%

D. Sibilants ('s' sounds)
90%

E. Balloons (Sandhi – joining words)
95%

F. Visarga (ḥ) & Avagraha (')
97.5%

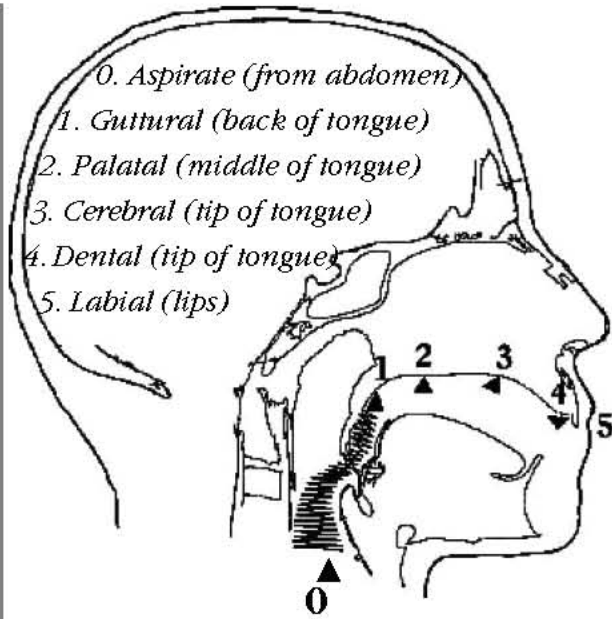
G. Sp. Comb. consonants: kṣa, jña, ñja
100%



Memorize it;
Recite it repeatedly;
Think it over (word by word meanings);
Realize it (Put into practice in your life)

MRTR – How To Utilize A Śloka To Transport Our Consciousness To Vaikuṇṭha

CONSO-NANTS	*Nor-mal*	*Aspi-rated*	*Nor-mal*	*Aspi-rated*	*Nor-mal*	*Semi-Vowels*	*Sib-ilants*	*Aspi-rates*
0. abdomen								ha & ḥ
1. throat	ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa			
2. palate	ca	cha	ja	jha	ña	ya	śa	
3. ridge	ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa	ra	ṣa	
4. teeth	ta	tha	da	dha	na	la	sa	
5. lips	pa	pha	ba	bha	ma& ṁ	va/ wa		



	V. Short	*Short*	*Long*	*Short*	*Long*	*Short*	*Long*	*Long*	*Long*	*Long*	*Long*	*Short*	*Long*	*Short*
VOWELS	**'**	**a**	**ā**	**i**	**ī**	**u**	**ū**	**e**	**ai**	**o**	**au**	**ṛ**	**ṝ**	**ḷ**

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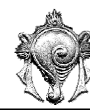
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Yours in service,

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Romanized Saṅskṛt



		SHORT a	LONG ā	SHORT i	LONG ī	SHORT u	LONG ū	LONG e	LONG ai	LONG o	LONG au	SHORT ṛ	LONG Ž	SHORT ḷ	aṁ	aḥ
Aspirate	h	ha	hā	hi	hī	hu	hū	he	hai	ho	hau	hṛ	hŽ	hḷ	haṁ	haḥ
Gutturals	k	ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū	ke	kai	ko	kau	kṛ	kŽ	kḷ	kaṁ	kaḥ
	kh	kha	khā	khi	khī	khu	khū	khe	khai	kho	khau	khṛ	khŽ	khḷ	khaṁ	khaḥ
	g	ga	gā	gi	gī	gu	gū	ge	gai	go	gau	gṛ	gŽ	gḷ	gaṁ	gaḥ
	gh	gha	ghā	ghi	ghī	ghu	ghū	ghe	ghai	gho	ghau	ghṛ	ghŽ	ghḷ	ghaṁ	ghaḥ
	ṅ	ṅa	ṅā	ṅi	ṅī	ṅu	ṅū	ṅe	ṅai	ṅo	ṅau	ṅṛ	ṅŽ	ṅḷ	ṅa	ṅaḥ
Palatals	c	ca	cā	ci	cī	cu	cū	ce	cai	co	cau	cṛ	cŽ	cḷ	caṁ	caḥ
	ch	cha	chā	chi	chī	chu	chū	che	chai	cho	chau	chṛ	chŽ	chḷ	chaṁ	chaḥ
	j	ja	jā	ji	jī	ju	jū	je	jai	jo	jau	jṛ	jŽ	jḷ	jaṁ	jaḥ
	jh	jha	jhā	jhi	jhī	jhu	jhū	jhe	jhai	jho	jhau	jhṛ	jhŽ	jhḷ	jhaṁ	jhaḥ
	ñ	ña	ñā	ñi	ñī	ñu	ñū	ñe	ñai	ño	ñau	ñṛ	ñŽ	ñḷ	ñaṁ	ñaḥ
Cerebrals	ṭ	ṭa	ṭā	ṭi	ṭī	ṭu	ṭū	ṭe	ṭai	ṭo	ṭau	ṭṛ	ṭŽ	ṭḷ	ṭaṁ	ṭaḥ
	ṭh	ṭha	ṭhā	ṭhi	ṭhī	ṭhu	ṭhū	ṭhe	ṭhai	ṭho	ṭhau	ṭhṛ	ṭhŽ	ṭhḷ	ṭhaṁ	ṭhaḥ
	ḍ	ḍa	ḍā	ḍi	ḍī	ḍu	ḍū	ḍe	ḍai	ḍo	ḍau	ḍṛ	ḍŽ	ḍḷ	ḍaṁ	ḍaḥ
	ḍh	ḍha	ḍhā	ḍhi	ḍhī	ḍhu	ḍhū	ḍhe	ḍhai	ḍho	ḍhau	ḍhṛ	ḍhŽ	ḍhḷ	ḍhaṁ	ḍhaḥ
	ṇ	ṇa	ṇā	ṇi	ṇī	ṇu	ṇū	ṇe	ṇai	ṇo	ṇau	ṇṛ	ṇŽ	ṇḷ	ṇaṁ	ṇaḥ
Dentals	t	ta	tā	ti	tī	tu	tū	te	tai	to	tau	tṛ	tŽ	tḷ	taṁ	taḥ
	th	tha	thā	thi	thī	thu	thū	the	thai	tho	thau	thṛ	thŽ	thḷ	thaṁ	thaḥ
	d	da	dā	di	dī	du	dū	de	dai	do	dau	dṛ	dŽ	dḷ	daṁ	daḥ
	dh	dha	dhā	dhi	dhī	dhu	dhū	dhe	dhai	dho	dhau	dhṛ	dhŽ	dhḷ	dhaṁ	dhaḥ
	n	na	nā	ni	nī	nu	nū	ne	nai	no	nau	nṛ	nŽ	nḷ	naṁ	naḥ
Labials	p	pa	pā	pi	pī	pu	pū	pe	pai	po	pau	pṛ	pŽ	pḷ	paṁ	paḥ
	ph	pha	phā	phi	phī	phu	phū	phe	phai	pho	phau	phṛ	phŽ	phḷ	phaṁ	phaḥ
	b	ba	bā	bi	bī	bu	bū	be	bai	bo	bau	bṛ	bŽ	bḷ	baṁ	baḥ
	bh	bha	bhā	bhi	bhī	bhu	bhū	bhe	bhai	bho	bhau	bhṛ	bhŽ	bhḷ	bhaṁ	bhaḥ
	m	ma	mā	mi	mī	mu	mū	me	mai	mo	mau	mṛ	mŽ	mḷ	maṁ	maḥ
Semi-Vowels	y	ya	yā	yi	yī	yu	yū	ye	yai	yo	yau	yṛ	yŽ	yḷ	yaṁ	yaḥ
	r	ra	rā	ri	rī	ru	rū	re	rai	ro	rau	rṛ	rŽ	rḷ	raṁ	raḥ
	l	la	lā	li	lī	lu	lū	le	lai	lo	lau	lṛ	lŽ	lḷ	laṁ	laḥ
	v	va	vā	vi	vī	vu	vū	ve	vai	vo	vau	vṛ	vŽ	vḷ	vaṁ	vaḥ
Sibilants	ś	śa	śā	śi	śī	śu	śū	śe	śai	śo	śau	śṛ	śŽ	śḷ	śaṁ	śaḥ
	ṣ	ṣa	ṣā	ṣi	ṣī	ṣu	ṣū	ṣe	ṣai	ṣo	ṣau	ṣṛ	ṣŽ	ṣḷ	ṣaṁ	ṣaḥ
	s	sa	sā	si	sī	su	sū	se	sai	so	sau	sṛ	sŽ	sḷ	saṁ	saḥ

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